

FOREST LEGACY

Keeping important forests for future generations

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Forest Legacy Hits 100,000–Acre Mark

Governor Announces Maine's Largest Conservation Easement

Augusta, ME—

On April 24, 2000, Governor King, a representative of Senator Olympia Snowe, Senator Susan Collins, and Congressman John Baldacci unveiled the largest conservation easement in Maine's history at a press conference in Augusta. Governor King announced the purchase of a 20,268-acre conservation easement around Nicaous Lake (pronounced Nica-TAO-is) and West Lake by the Maine Department of Conservation that will ensure responsible forest management. This tripled the Forest Legacy acreage in Maine. "By day's end, three bald eagle nesting sites, 34 miles of shoreline, seven remote ponds, and 20,000 acres of land will be protected forever," remarked Governor Angus King, Jr. "In my book, that makes today a red letter day for Maine's environment."

The Robbins family, who are the landowners, are delighted to offer a conservation easement on the property. According to Jenness Robbins, president of Robbins Lumber, "Easements are important for wildlife and public recreation and are an integral part of Maine's working forest. We believe in a balance between ecology and economics."

"As land managers and primary timber owners on the property, we are pleased that, through the Nicaous and West Lakes easement purchase, the conservation community recognizes our

innovative forest management system, called Forest Patterns, which balances all the resource values of the forest," commented Steve Sloan, regional general manager for Champion International Corporation.

The easement is valued at roughly \$4.5 million, but thanks to the generosity of Robbins Lumber, the state was able to purchase it for a reduced price of approximately \$3.6 million.

The USDA Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program provided \$3 million, and the Land for Maine's Future Program allocated \$750,000 toward the acquisition. Maine's congressional delegation was instrumental in funding the project. Senator Olympia Snowe said, "The Legacy program works particularly well in Maine by uniting—rather than dividing—disparate interests, and I am pleased to have been able to help in securing financing for this project."

The Nicaous and West Lakes project was championed by a partnership of conservation organizations that assisted the landowners and the State. The Trust for Public Land, the Forest Society of



Maine's Representative John Baldacci, Governor Angus King, and Senator Susan Collins (l to r) stand around a photo of the Nicaous Lake Forest Legacy project at a press conference. Photo by Jim Linnane.

Maine, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust pooled their skills and resources in order to bring the project to fruition.

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Land Protected to Date

(Includes donations and state purchases)

State	Acres	Value	Federal Payment
CT	352	\$ 390,000	\$ 390,000
MA	1,185	6,179,000	3,362,000
MD	668	775,000	0
ME	31,398	6,393,000	5,793,000
NH	12,797	5,112,000	1,804,000
NJ	1,345	4,712,000	612,000
NY	638	337,000	337,000
RI	433	923,000	920,000
UT	11,615	11,030,000	2,400,000
VT	48,587	7,550,000	5,336,000
WA	2,272	11,233,000	6,203,000
TOTAL:	111,290	\$54,634,000	\$27,157,000

Johnson Retires, Naturally

Waterbury, VT—

A Forest Legacy pilgrim is moving on. Charles Johnson, who works as Vermont State Naturalist in the Agency of Natural Resources, will retire from state government on April 30, 2000. Among other duties, Johnson was Vermont's Legacy coordinator, having been with the program since its very inception—even, he points out, before it became law. Johnson reflected, "I'm very proud that our Senator Leahy has been such an important figure in the whole program and that we were able to respond in such an important way, with 44,000 acres now enrolled."

Johnson also coordinated the initial Legacy acquisition, Cow Mountain Pond, of which he said, "It was my biggest Forest Legacy accomplishment emotionally because it was the first in the nation." About the program in general he says, "While it can be a complicated program for people to understand, I like its underlying conservation philosophy: willing landowners conserving important public values. I like the 'state option' provision, allowing the program greater flexibility and efficiencies." One issue he feels needs continued work is the recognition that important forestlands—as the States define important—are a national interest in and of themselves.

Looking back, Charles has fond memories of people he worked with in the beginning. He especially enjoyed the folks at the Green Mountain National Forest—Dick Ackerman, Ed Griffith, Pat D'Andrea, and others.

Johnson had some parting thoughts for those who continue with the program. "Be patient but persistent, as all meaningful things take a long time and a lot of work. Keep your sense of humor well honed—you'll need it."

A reputable author in his private life, Charles' immediate plans are to do a lot of writing over the next few years (he is working on two books now). Some extended trips are also in his future (England, Italy, Galapagos, and his mother's homeland, New Zealand). Johnson muses, "This spring and summer, though, I plan to fully experience my own backyard and forest, amble about this lovely State (some Legacy tracts included), watch the dogs sleep, fish, read, canoe, and daydream."



Charles Johnson with his dog, Oman

Guidelines Revision Update

San Antonio, TX—

The Forest Legacy Implementation Guidelines have been undergoing examination to determine whether they require revision. A public comment period closed on February 15, 2000. Bill Angelus of the Forest Service analyzed the comments and prepared a summary that the Guideline Team reviewed the third week in March. The Guideline Revision team is made up of State and Federal representatives. A draft document will be out for public review within the month. After the public has had a chance to comment, more revisions will be made. The target date for completion of the Guideline Revision is July 1, 2000.

Forest Legacy Promoted During Public Witness Day

*By Lynn Scherer
Land Trust Alliance*

Washington, DC—

The Forest Legacy Program was brought up numerous times by witnesses appearing before the House of Representative's Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee on April 6, 2000. The Subcommittee holds an annual Public Witness Day to solicit public commentary on programs funded by the Subcommittee, such as Forest Legacy. Groups including the Land Trust Alliance, Pacific Forest Trust, Tennessee River Gorge Trust, Northern Forest Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, American Forests, and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies testified in favor of providing \$60 million for Forest Legacy, as proposed in the Clinton Administration's Fiscal Year 2001 budget. Several other organizations submitted written testimony supporting the President's request.

The National Association of State Foresters and the National Woodland Owners Association asked that the Forest Legacy Program be allocated \$50 million—less than the President's budget, but still a major increase over last year's funding of \$30 million.

Jim Brown of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust (TRGT) told the Subcommittee, "Forest Legacy can help TRGT save our canyon and can help . . . save other locally special places . . . the areas that Thoreau walked . . . or where you taught your grandchildren to fish. Together, these special places equal a better America made more livable through green and open space which preserves the living systems that support us all."

Mandatory Funding Bills and the Forest Legacy Program

*By Ted Beauvais
Washington, DC*

There are several bills before Congress to make use of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues from oil and gas leasing. The Administration has not taken a position on these proposals. What follows are some observations on these proposals prepared with the help of Steve Hart from the Forest Service Legislative Affairs staff. This article in no way represents an endorsement of any pending proposal.

The Library of Congress' Thomas website describes HR 701, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) of 1999, as follows: To provide Outer Continental Shelf Impact Assistance to State and local governments, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978, and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) to establish a fund to meet the outdoor conservation and recreation needs of the American people, and for other purposes.

CARA would take \$2.8 billion of OCS funds and use them to fund a variety of lands and resource protection programs. The identical Senate companion version (Louisiana Senator Landrieu's bill) is

S.2123. CARA is expected to be debated on the House floor in mid-May. It has 315 cosponsors. The Senate version of CARA has 15 cosponsors. Both bills would provide for mandatory and off-budget funding of existing and new programs annually

One of the existing programs, LWCF, is currently authorized, subject to annual appropriations, to use OCS revenues for Federal (the Federal side) and State and local (the State side) land acquisition purchases. Federal land management agencies (Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service) receive funds directly for a specific list of projects. States and local governments receive grants from the National Park Service for eligible projects. State side funds were greatly reduced in the 1980's, zeroed out in 1996, and funded at \$40 million this year.

As it currently stands, the Forest Legacy Program is not part of CARA. There is talk of a House amendment that would add funding for the Forest Legacy Program at \$50 million annually, but that has not yet been introduced, nor would it be assured of passage if it is introduced. During Resources Committee markup, Congressman Mark Udall of Colorado discussed—but did not offer—an amendment to add \$50 million each for the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) and Forest Legacy programs. Representative Udall indicated at the markup that he would offer the amendment on the House floor. In dialogue with

Committee Chairman Don Young (Alaska), the members secured a commitment to work with Young on a floor amendment.

Another bill has been introduced in the Senate only. New Mexico Senator Bingaman's bill, S. 2181, would provide \$50 million each for U&CF, Forest Legacy, USDA's Farmland Protection program, and the Forest Service's Rural Development and Economic Action programs in addition to the LWCF and land restoration funding. It has 11 cosponsors. On March 6, 2000, it was referred to Senate committee. The Thomas website summarizes S. 2181 as: A bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to provide full funding for the LWCF, and to provide dedicated funding for other conservation programs, which includes forestry conservation programs.

There are other provisions of CARA that should be noted.

- Governors would be required to account for LWCF funds each fiscal year in a report to the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate.
- Administrative expenses would be limited under CARA to 2 percent for any activity.
- The bill calls for the Department of the Interior, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, to establish rules regarding State and Local government recordkeeping and auditing.

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Forest Near Panguitch Lake, Utah, Protected

*By Ann Price
Salt Lake City, UT*

Located in southern Utah, 935 acres at Panguitch was protected by a Forest Legacy conservation easement on April 12, 2000. The scale and pace of development at Panguitch Lake denotes a high degree of threat to

subdivide for recreational homes. The Federal payment of \$1.5 million protects interests valued at \$1.53 million, including high mountain forests noted for wildlife habitat values—home to an elk herd and serving as a wildlife corridor for wildlife passing from ridge to ridge; watershed capacity and scenic beauty—water from the lake supplies nearby agricultural lands; and recreational opportunities—hiking, fishing, and other water-based recreation. The Dixie National Forest land is on surrounding ridges.



Carbon Sequestration: Yet Another Benefit of Forests

By Linda Heath
Durham, NH

Over the last decade, forests have been increasingly recognized for their ability to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and to store the carbon as woody material. Carbon is stored in all parts of the forest: living trees, dead trees, fallen leaves, and soil. The storage of carbon is called carbon sequestration. Carbon also remains stored in wood that is harvested and processed into wood products. Products that last a long time, such as furniture, hold the carbon until the carbon is released either by slow decay or emitted quickly such as by burning.

Interest in carbon has developed as the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has increased almost 30 percent since pre-industrial times, and the concentration of other carbon-containing gases such as methane has more than doubled. These gases are often called greenhouse gases because they trap heat in the earth's atmosphere, similar to how a greenhouse provides a warmer environment. Many scientists believe that the increase in greenhouse gases will cause global climate change and will result in a warmer earth globally, but may have other effects locally.



Carbon is sequestered in living trees, dead trees, fallen leaves and soil.

It is this threat of climate change that has nations discussing ways to limit greenhouse gas emissions, by how much, and when. In June 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, formed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which is a body of country representatives who negotiate. Negotiations often center on emissions from fossil fuel burning, and emissions and sequestration resulting from land use change and forestry. The climate change negotiation process produced the Kyoto Protocol (named after the location of the meeting in Kyoto, Japan), of which two articles are specifically about forestry. Article 3.3 states that nations are to count carbon from afforestation, reforestation, and deforestation since 1990, and Article 3.4 deals with sequestration brought about by extra forestry activities. The operational details of the protocol are still under negotiation, and much work remains before it may be adopted. For more information on the climate change negotiation process, see the web page for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: www.unfccc.int.

It is these negotiations and the possibility of legally binding emissions commitments that have begun to motivate individuals and companies to adopt forestry activities to sequester carbon in forest stands. In the United States, forms have been available to the public since 1995 to voluntarily report carbon sequestration through the U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration (www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/1605/frntvrng.html). In 1998, carbon sequestration due to reported projects was 3 million metric tons. Carbon clearinghouse companies such as UtiliTree (www.kcpl.com/about/environment/UtiliTree.htm) are forming to sponsor projects to sequester carbon dioxide through tree planting and forest management and preservation. More interest will develop as more funds become available from utilities and other groups to implement forestry projects to sequester carbon.

Many activities that have always been considered good forestry sequester carbon. Activities include ensuring existing stands are stocked, ensuring regeneration is adequate after harvest, and establishing forests on nonforest land. Basically any activity that increases forest growth will increase carbon sequestration. Other end-use activities such as increasing recycling generally increase carbon sequestration. Although any one forest stand has little effect on the global carbon cycle, together, forests and their owners will have a noticeable effect.



Forest Legacy is a program established in the 1990 Farm Bill. State and Federal Partners work together to implement the program. Information sharing occurs many ways including this periodic update. If you would like a copy, please send information to: Forest Legacy, USDA Forest Service, 271 Mast Road, P.O. Box 640, Durham, NH 03824-0640.
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